

It is generally recognized that the United Nations has a central role to play in the arms control and disarmament process. As the only international organization of its kind with global responsibilities, the United Nations can make an important contribution to the verification of arms control and disarmament agreements, deriving from its primary responsibility in the promotion of the arms control and disarmament process.

2. Historic Background

The basic idea for an international verification organization (IVO) linked to the United Nations is not new. In September 1961, for example, the USA and the USSR agreed on a set of principles for disarmament negotiations.¹ Among these principles were the following:

"All disarmament measures should be implemented from beginning to end under such strict and effective international control as would provide firm assurance that all parties are honouring their obligations. During and after the implementation of general and complete disarmament, the most thorough control should be exercised, the nature and extent of such control depending on the requirements for verification of the disarmament measures being carried out in each stage. To implement control over and inspection of disarmament, an International Disarmament Organization including all parties to the agreement should be created within the framework of the United Nations. This International Disarmament Organization and its inspectors should be assured unrestricted access without veto to all places as necessary for the purpose of effective verification."

Later, fairly detailed schemes for IVOs were advanced by both the USSR and USA as part of their general proposals in the context of discussions on general and complete disarmament (GCD).² However, in both cases, though the IVO was conceived as being global and comprehensive in terms of the scope of its functions, it nevertheless remained treaty-specific in the exercise of those functions: its powers would apply only to parties of the agreement. Moreover, the IVO was to be composed only of parties to the agreement. While the expectation at the time was that most countries of the world would participate in any GCD agreement, it is still clear